

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 OTTAWA 09584 072218Z
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-07
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
USIA-06 /059 W
-----121448 072224Z /12

P 072204Z NOV 77
FM AMEMBASSY OTTAWA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5287
INFO AMCONSUL MONTREAL
AMCONSUL QUEBEC
ALL OTHER CANADIAN POSTS POUCH

C O N F I D E N T I A L OTTAWA 09584

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, PDEV, CA
SUBJECT: CONSERVATIVES DISPLAY UNITY AT PC CONVENTION

1. SUMMARY: IN A RARE SHOW OF UNITY, THE DELEGATES TO LAST WEEKEND'S PROGRESSIVE CONSERVATIVE CONVENTION OVERWHELMINGLY VOTED TO SUPPORT JOE CLARK AS THEIR LEADER, THEREBY GIVING HIM A RELATIVELY FREE HAND TO DECIDE PARTY POLICY AND HOW IT WILL BE EMPLOYED. FOR A VARIETY OF REASONS, THE CONSERVATIVES ARE NOW CONVINCED THAT THEY HAVE A GOOD CHANCE OF WINNING THE NEXT FEDERAL ELECTIONS. AS THIS CONVENTION DEMONSTRATED, HOWEVER, THE CONSERVATIVES ARE STILL EXTREMELY WEAK IN THE PROVINCE OF QUEBEC, AND THAT SITUATION MAY AGAIN PROVE TO BE THEIR ACHILLES HEEL. END SUMMARY.

2. IN A GENERALLY BUOYANT MOOD, OVER 1200 DELEGATES FROM ACROSS CANADA ATTENDED THE PC NATIONAL POLICY CONVENTION IN QUEBEC CITY LAST WEEKEND AND, AS ONE OBSERVER PUT IT, MADE A VIRTUE OUT OF NECESSITY BY STRONGLY SUPPORTING THE LEADERSHIP OF JOE CLARK. THANKS IN PART TO THE ABSENCE OF JACK HORNER, WHO DEFECTED
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 OTTAWA 09584 072218Z

TO THE LIBERALS LAST SPRING, AND OF FORMER PRIME MINISTER DIFENBAKER, WHO WAS ILL, THERE WAS NONE OF THE USUAL INTRA-PARTY SQUABBLING WHICH HAS PLAGUED THE TORIES IN THE PAST. MOREOVER, THE ORGANIZERS OF THE CONVENTION DELIBERATELY ESTABLISHED THE FORMAT IN A WAY TO AVOID INTERNAL CONFRONTATIONS. SPECIFICALLY, WHILE THERE WERE WORKSHOPS TO DISCUSS NATIONAL UNITY,

THE ECONOMY, AND OTHER ISSUES, THERE WERE NO RESOLUTIONS PRESENTED FOR ADOPTION. THE CLOSEST THE CONVENTION CAME TO SPARKING DISAGREEMENT OCCURRED WHEN MP ROBERT COATES OF NOVA SCOTIA, WHO IS IDENTIFIED WITH THE DIEFENBAKER WING OF THE PARTY, WAS NOMINATED TO BE THE NEW NATIONAL PRESIDENT. THOUGH COATES WAS EASILY ELECTED, IT WAS EVIDENT THAT MANY DELEGATES HAVE NO ENTHUSIASM FOR HIS BRAND OF CONSERVATISM, INCLUDING HIS RECENT FAVORABLE COMMENTS ON SOUTH AFRICA'S RACIAL POLICIES.

3. COMMENT. JOE CLARK AND HIS CONSERVATIVE COLLEAGUES HAVE CLEARLY WEATHERED THE GLOOMY PERIOD OF LAST SUMMER WHEN THEY WERE TRAILING THE LIBERALS BY 24 POINTS IN THE GALLUP POLL AND WHEN IT APPEARED THERE MIGHT BE FEDERAL ELECTIONS IN THE FALL. SINCE THEN, THE CONSERVATIVES HAVE BENEFITTED FROM VARIOUS DEVELOPMENTS, INCLUDING THE GOVERNMENT'S SEEMING INABILITY TO GET THE ECONOMY MOVING, THE REVELATIONS OF ILLEGAL ACTIVITIES BY THE RCMP, AND THE INTRODUCTION OF TELEVISION IN PARLIAMENT, WHICH HAS GIVEN THE OPPOSITION MORE MEDIA EXPOSURE THAN IT EVER HAD PREVIOUSLY. JOE CLARK, PERSONALLY, HAS ALSO GROWN IN STATURE IN THE EYES OF MANY OBSERVERS AS HE HAS GENERALLY HANDLED HIMSELF EFFECTIVELY IN DEBATES AND AS HE HAS IMPROVED HIS SPEAKING ABILITY.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 OTTAWA 09584 072218Z

4. BASED ON OUR CONTACTS WITH DELEGATES AT THE CONVENTION, WE SENSE THAT THE CONSERVATIVES ARE NOW CONVINCED THEY AT LEAST HAVE A FIGHTING CHANCE TO DEFEAT THE LIBERALS IN NEXT YEAR'S ELECTIONS. WHETHER THEY CAN DO SO, HOWEVER, WILL DEPEND TO AN IMPORTANT DEGREE ON HOW SUCCESSFUL THEY ARE IN GAINING POLITICAL GROUND IN THE PROVINCE OF QUEBEC WHERE THEY NOW HOLD ONLY THREE RIDINGS OUT OF 74 AND WHERE THEY ATTRACTED A RELATIVELY SMALL NUMBER OF DELEGATES, EVEN THOUGH THE CONVENTION WAS HELD IN QUEBEC CITY. IN OUR VIEW, IT WILL BE EXCEEDINGLY DIFFICULT FOR CLARK TO MOVE IN A WAY WHICH WILL APPEAL TO QUEBECERS WITHOUT SIMULTANEOUSLY LOSING SUPPORT IN RURAL, ANGLOPHONE AREAS OUTSIDE OF QUEBEC. ENDERS

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PARTY LINE, POLITICAL PARTIES, PARTY MEETINGS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 07-Nov-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977OTTAWA09584
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770411-0222
Format: TEL
From: OTTAWA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19771188/aaaacxlu.tel
Line Count: 109
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 87b75a20-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 27-Dec-2004 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 689262
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: CONSERVATIVES DISPLAY UNITY AT PC CONVENTION
TAGS: PINT, PDEV, CA
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/87b75a20-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009